

Bornkamm, known for his theological interests, was prevented by death from producing the third volume of what he had begun (earlier than Brecht) as a massive three-volume study of Luther's career.

Regarding Brecht's use of source materials, he points out that aside "from insignificant trivialities, every text [in the later volumes of the Weimarer Ausgabe] has been included in this presentation, although in different degree" (xii). But he also makes substantial use of the earlier volumes of WA, plus giving a considerable number of citations from various other collections of primary source materials. His huge section of endnote references (385-444) underscores the care with which he has worked.

James Schaaf, the translator for the English edition, has given us an excellent rendition (approved by Brecht himself), but he has done much more. Painstakingly he has searched out in the 55-volume American edition of Luther's works all references that can be matched with Brecht's citations of the WA, and has supplied them as supplements to the WA citations.

Two indexes (a general index for this volume, 445-460; and a "Subject Index to Volumes 1-3," 461-511) conclude the volume. Further enhancement is achieved by inclusion of a section of twenty photographs between pp. 14 and 15, and fourteen other pictorial illustrations (generally woodcuts) placed appropriately throughout the volume.

In every respect, this is a book that deserves to be widely read. And indeed, Brecht must be congratulated and thanked for his phenomenal achievement in producing the entire set of volumes.

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Cohen, Mark E. *The Cultic Calendars of the Ancient Near East*. Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 1993. 504 pp. Cloth, \$37.50.

The Cultic Calendars of the Ancient Near East by Mark E. Cohen is a comprehensive study of the calendars and annual or semiannual festivals of much of the Ancient Near East, including Mesopotamia, Elam, and the Levant. Building on the pioneering efforts of scholars such as B. Landsberger (*Der kultische-Kalendar der Babylonier und Assyrer*, 1915) and S. Langdon (*Babylonian Menologies and the Semitic Calendars*, 1935), Cohen has brought together a vast and up-to-date array of material relevant to over two thousand years of calendars and festivals. Much of this material was not yet available to Landsberger and Langdon, coming as it does from more recent excavations, tablet publications, and studies of cultic calendars limited to certain cities or periods.

Cohen's intention is "to provide a basic tool for further research" (ix) by non-Assyriologists as well as Assyriologists. By making the material in this volume accessible to non-Assyriologists, Cohen has provided a valuable reference work for scholars and students pursuing various disciplines of Ancient Near Eastern studies.

The book begins with an introduction to Ancient Near Eastern perceptions of lunar and solar cycles and agricultural seasons, and an overview of the development of calendric systems, which were intimately bound up with cultic observances. The bulk of the book presents material by geographic location, within overall divisions by millennium. For example, the section on the Third Millennium B.C. includes Early Semitic Calendars, Lagaš and Girsu, Nippur, Ur, Umma, etc. A final section on festival themes brings together information relevant to particular festival traditions, the *Akītu* Festival, and festivals for men and gods of the netherworld. An index and selected bibliography are provided at the end of the volume.

A number of features contribute to the usefulness and quality of the book as a reference study: (1) an abundance of references; (2) translations, often with transliterations of important texts; (3) cross-referencing and strategic redundancy; (4) a high level of technical accuracy; (5) concise and generally lucid description and argumentation; (6) appropriate caution, with recognition of limitations of evidence, and (7) clearly marked distinctions between solid information and less established hypotheses.

Two noteworthy hypotheses compellingly presented by Cohen are: (1) The first millennium B.C. Babylonian *akītu* festival of spring may have developed from separate festivals for the gods Nabû and Marduk (308, 441). (2) *Arabsamnu*, the name of the eighth month in the Standard Mesopotamian calendar, may have been borrowed from the Old Persian month name *Markašan(aš)*, to which the Judean month name *Marhešvan* is remarkably similar (302, 331). Since these ideas have important implications for the nature of the *akītu* festival and the Standard Mesopotamian calendar, respectively, it will be interesting to see whether or not they stand the test of time.

The title of the book, *The Cultic Calendars of the Ancient Near East*, is somewhat misleading in two ways. On the one hand, it implies a broader geographic scope than Cohen has included, or could include. Some major Ancient Near Eastern areas such as Anatolia and Egypt are not covered. On the other hand, it implies the existence of *non-cultic* calendars of the Ancient Near East, which would be outside the scope of this book. In fact, the "cultic calendars" were the *only* calendars of the Ancient Near East. They were cultic in the sense that they were used for marking cultic (and often mythic) time and in the sense that many months were named after festivals or gods. However, these calendars were also used for noncultic purposes and there were (apparently) noncultic month names, and months for which no festivals are attested.

Cohen has achieved his goal of making the Ancient Near Eastern calendars and festivals accessible to non-Assyriologists in that his book gathers much material hitherto available only in the form of copies of cuneiform tablets or in technical Assyriological articles unknown and/or unavailable to nonspecialists. However, a significant percentage of the book is necessarily devoted to detailed presentation of linguistic evidence and argumentation regarding month and festival names and their significance. Some portions will not be readily understood by readers lacking Assyriological background.

Nevertheless, the general level of nonspecialist understanding could easily be enhanced in future editions by the inclusion of a few basic explanations regarding such matters as transliteration/ transcription conventions and abbreviations for dating by regnal years.

Cohen generally presents evidence in a careful manner. However, the following statement with regard to a spring New Year for the Israelites gives a false impression: "For the Israelites the New Year was the appointed time for cleansing the temple (Ezekiel [sic] 45:18 . . ." (15). It is true that Ezekiel prescribes the cleansing of the temple on the first day of the first month. But the visionary temple of Ezekiel was never built and its procedures were never carried out. The yearly day for cleansing the sanctuary/temple which was actually practiced was the tenth day of the seventh month in the autumn (Lev 16; 23:26-32), known in postbiblical times as Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.

The criticisms voiced above are minor. Cohen's work will be an indispensable reference guide to Ancient Near Eastern calendars and festivals for years to come.

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Doukhan, Jacques B. *Hebrew for Theologians: A Textbook for the Study of Biblical Hebrew in Relation to Hebrew Thinking*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1993. 278 pp. Paper, \$28.50.

Jacques Doukhan, a Hebrew himself with a Ph.D. in Hebrew and Jewish studies and postdoctoral research at Hebrew University, approaches the study of Hebrew with an insider's sensitivity to nuances of meaning that escape the average scholar. This volume contains a treasury of information that will fire enthusiasm in teachers and motivate students to learn. Since language is shaped by a people's culture and thought patterns, an outsider will never master it by learning forms and syntax alone. *Hebrew for Theologians* is different from many other grammars, in that it goes beyond the *what* of the forms to the *why*—the philosophy of Hebrew thought that molded the language.

The author describes the Hebrew concepts of space, time, man, and God. The language is dynamic, with verbs (*poal* meaning action) constituting the basic units of the language from which the other parts of speech derive. Verbs are not concerned primarily with time but rather with action—accomplished (perfect tense) and unaccomplished (imperfect). The seven verb patterns, each active form having its corresponding passive, are diagrammed as a menorah (with no theological explanation)! The book goes beyond other textbooks in explaining relationships between words: families of words, permutations such as reversing of letters or changing one letter, and the variety of meanings (polysemy) of a word. The Hebrew propensity for piling up several words into one, such as construct chains or nouns with articles, prepositions, and possessive pronouns, is an expression of unity and totality. The book abounds in pithy comments